

Mozambique shark conservation and Chinese actors

I'd like to share the information below with you because we are worried about the future of sharks and local fishing communities in Mozambique.

The movie Shiver does a great job of showing the concerns about shark conservation in Mozambique.

From what we have learned, the **Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd** (福州宏东远洋渔业有限公司) is becoming a major investor in fishing and shark products in Mozambique. This could seriously affect sharks, fish and other marine resources in Mozambique.

Here are some facts about **Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd** (福州宏东远洋渔业有限公司):

- According to the description in 2009 from PreIPO Capital Partners Limited, Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd is one of the largest shark fishing and shark products companies in China, it operates a full-range of operations from fishing to manufacturing shark products.
- The company's name in Mozambique is **Mozambique Hong & Mo Fishery and Food Development Co., Ltd** (莫桑比克宏与莫渔业食品发展有限公司)
- Their main business partner is:
MONTB.BINGA.SA Limited, a company under the Mozambique Ministry of Defense (We heard the boss was the former Minister of the Ministry of Communications)
- The company's total investment in Mozambique reached 400 million RMB (around 60 million USD) in 2010.¹
- The company plans to send 20 ocean-going vessels (several hundred tons per vessel) and 50 boats to Mozambique. In 2010 they only had 4 ocean going vessels licenses.²
- The company already has plans to build a cold storage facility in Catembe with a capacity of several thousand tons. Construction costs were estimated at 2 million (not confirmed if that is RMB or USD). Construction was supposed to start in July 2010 and it should be finished already.³

¹ According to an interview with company workers in Mozambique in 2010.

² According to an interview with company workers in Mozambique in 2010.

³ According to an interview with company workers in Mozambique in 2010.

- In interviews we did in Catembe in 2010 with Chinese workers from this company, they have received licenses for fishing in Mozambique. They also hinted they would be fishing sharks.
- The company has been expanding quickly in the past few years. According to brief introduction for the company or the job postings the company has distributed in different years (from 2009-2011), it had 8 ocean-going vessels in 2009⁴, 20 in 2010⁵, 40 in 2011 and is planning to have 40-50 more vessels in 2012⁶.
- The investment in Mozambique has been encouraged by the Mozambique government and Chinese (probably mostly provincial) government. 1) In 2009, an Executive Director from a department of the Ministry of Fisheries visited Fujian Province in China. The visit was mostly to engage the Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd. The vice mayor of Fuzhou also welcomed the ministry.⁷ 2) The company and its investment in Mozambique was listed as a symbol project in an official announcement of the development of Chinese overseas fishery industry in 2005-2010.⁸ 3) Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd. was listed in the companies that Fuzhou government would help and encourage to listing in the stock market in 2011.⁹
- The company has a much larger investment in Mauritania. The company signed a 100 million USD investment contract with Mauritania. They received several dozen fishing licenses and 90,000 square meters for a fish processing and frozen storage facility.¹⁰ One worker has moved from Mozambique to the Mauritania investment.¹¹

I have some additional materials that may be helpful. However, most of them are in Chinese.

They include:

- Materials about how Chinese policy and finance that encourages the overseas fishing for Chinese fishery company.
- Several reports that talk about the price of shark fin and other shark products.

⁴ Brief introduction of Hongdong, Website of China Agricultural Association for International Exchange, 2009-01-20, http://www.caaie.org.cn/Html/2009_01_20/2353_3330_2009_01_20_3342.html

⁵ Job posting, 2010-12-08, http://hr.wtojob.com/100235_338350.html

⁶ Job posting, 2011-04-01, <http://www.yingjiesheng.com/job-001-035-356.html>

⁷ *Leaders of Fuzhou Met With Mozambique Fishery Delegation Group in 25th*, News website of Fuzhou, 2009-8-26, <http://news.fznews.com.cn/zhengwu/2009-8-26/200982683N-2P8dZY20385.shtml>

⁸ *Offshore Fishing During the Eleventh-Five Plan Period Made Significant Progress in China*, 2011-02-25, <http://news.qq.com/a/20110225/001103.htm>

⁹ An announcement from Fujian Provincial Oceanic and Fishery Department, 2011-05-05, <http://fishery.aweb.com.cn/2011/0505/5129094321790.shtml>

¹⁰ According to job postings the company has distributed in 2011

¹¹ According to an exchange with a company worker in 2011

- Some news articles about bad experiences in China in managing marine resources and the crises that Chinese fishermen face after predatory fishing.

There are also other actors involved in sharks in Mozambique other than the Fuzhou Hongdong Far-east Fishery Co., Ltd..

Other actors include:

Shark Fin Buyers

There are several Chinese seafood trade companies in Mozambique, some based in Maputo and others with new offices in other towns along the coast. They are most obviously involved in trading sea cucumber, but they also actively purchase shark fins from fishermen. The shark fins are more profitable than sea cucumber. It is quite probable that they encourage local fishermen to hunt sharks so as to buy the fins. When exporting the shark fin, these trading companies will often hide the shark's fins in shipments of sea cucumber. So, it is very difficult to know exactly how much shark's fin is being exported from Mozambique to China by these small and medium-sized trading companies. Some of these companies have relocated from Tanzania in the past few years since they faced increasing competition from Chinese seafood trading companies there.

Chinese Restaurants

There are Chinese restaurants in Mozambique that probably order shark's fin directly from the trading companies and provide shark's fin soup to customers. They are not major consumers, but they might be one of the ways to influence the awareness of the Chinese community about shark conservation in the country.

Chinese Fishery Companies and Individuals

There are some Chinese registered fishery companies in Mozambique, such as the the Mozambique Tonysen Seafood Fishing Company(莫桑比克托尼森综合贸易公司), which belongs to the Chen Group in Numpula. We do not know if they or other companies fish for sharks, but they are possible actors in this issue. In addition, other companies have tried to rent ships from China to bring to Mozambique to fish.

I hope this information is useful to you.

We are interested in discussing what groups in Mozambique and in China might be able to do to protect the sharks and other marine resources in your country. We would be interested to hear your ideas about this.